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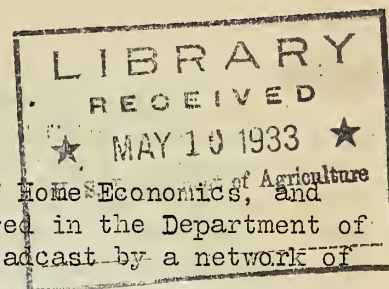
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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Marketing for Meats.



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. W. C. Davis, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 49 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, April 18, 1933.

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VAN DEMAN:

How do you do, Everybody:

Well, Mr. Davis, it's a long time since we talked over retail meat prices. They've been dropping lower and lower, if what I notice in the markets here in Washington are an index of the entire country.

DAVIS:

Yes, in most cases meats are selling at retail for very much less than they were a year ago. This may be all to the good for the consumer, but it's mighty hard on the producer. Anyway, we can help the producer some if we go ahead and use up the supply.

VAN DEMAN:

As usual, Mr. Davis, I'm speaking for the consumer who wants to get the most for her money. What are the cheapest meats on the market now?

DAVIS:

Well, it's hard to say. All meats are cheap, but pork is about the cheapest meat you can buy. Breakfast bacon is lower in price than I've ever known it. This week I bought breakfast bacon at 12½ cents a pound in a retail store. It runs all the way from 12½ to 20 cents.

VAN DEMAN:

Depending, I suppose, on where you buy.

DAVIS:

Yes, on where you buy and on the brand. Smoked hams are also very low in price -- around 12 to 15 cents. Fresh pork loins are another economical item. Our figures today show that pork loins are selling in the retail markets for 10 to 14 cents, and you may be able to do even better than that in some places.

VAN DEMAN:

When warm weather comes some people seem to lose interest in fresh pork. Personally, I think that pork loin well roasted and sliced cold is excellent eating in spring or summer. Hot roast pork does seem rather rich and heavy, though it doesn't run very much higher in calories than well-fatted cuts of other meats.

Mr. Davis, with all pork so low in price, lard must be about the cheapest cooking fat there is on the market.

(over)

DAVIS:

Yes, that's true. Lard is down to around 6 and 7 cents a pound retail. Lamb is another low-priced meat now. I mean, of course, the heavier lamb, not the fancy hot-house lamb. That is always a high-priced delicacy which comes in the early spring. But through most of the year, there's a steady supply of high quality lamb which starts out on the range, moves east to the feed lots, and then on to market according to demand. Lamb produced this way is tender, and well fattened, and very fine flavored. Just now we're getting lamb from California and soon more will come from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia.

VAN DEMAN:

Mr. Davis, what is leg of lamb selling for now?

DAVIS:

Oh, around 17 to 20 cents a pound. And you can get breast of lamb for 5 and 7 cents, and shoulder for around 12 to 15 cents a pound. Miss Van Deman, you recommend roasting both shoulder and breast of lamb, I believe.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, shoulder of lamb with the bones taken out and a nice savory stuffing put in, and then roasted, we think makes an exceptionally good combination. When we first tried roasting breast of lamb we were surprised how successful it was. Miss Alexander has a way of grinding up the meat from the foreshank and putting that into the bread crumb stuffing and then baking onions along with the roast. It certainly is attractive. And with prices what they are at present, these are two very economical roasts of lamb.

Mr. Davis, I suppose beef prices follow the same trend as the others.

DAVIS:

Just about. Chuck roast of beef is selling at retail for 15 to 19 cents, that is the cross ribs and top chuck. If you want a good economical cut for swiss steak, you can get shoulder arm steak for 16 or 17 cents a pound. Personally, I like a cut from the forequarter for swiss steak just as well as round which costs 5 to 10 cents more. Of course all cuts of beef are down. If anything, the high priced tender steaks and roasts have dropped more than the less tender cuts because there's less demand for them.

VAN DEMAN:

Mr. Davis, while we're talking about beef, can you tell us how the Government grading is going? As a consumer I'm very much interested in the idea of buying my meats according to quality grades. When I go into a meat market I always look for that stamp "U. S. Good Steer" or "U. S. Choice Steer" on a piece of beef. Quality marks like that help me in buying.

DAVIS:

Well, other consumers seem to feel that way also. We're asked to grade more meat every year. During March this year the Government graded and stamped over 18 million pounds of beef and over a half a million pounds of lamb. This is about two million pounds more beef and 100,000 pounds more lamb than we graded last year at this time. Yes, the idea of grading meat according to quality standards does seem to be growing.

VAN DEMAN:

Mr. Davis, there's one small point about these grade marks on meat I'd like to ask. The words are stamped on with purple letters, just the way the little round stamp "U. S. Inspected" is put on. Of course, this ink must be perfectly harmless.

DAVIS:

Yes, it is. We use a pure vegetable compound that is entirely harmless, and it generally disappears during cooking. So don't let the butcher trim off the purple grading stamp or the inspection stamp on your meat. I know that you home economics people find that a roast cooks much better when it has a good covering of fat all over the lean.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that's right. A roast with gashes through the fat so that the lean is bare dries out more and doesn't cook so quickly as a roast with a smooth unbroken layer of fat on top.

Thank you, Mr. Davis, for all your information about meat prices.

Goodbye, Everybody, for this time.

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